

designated and President Bush proclaimed the month of May as Asian Pacific Heritage Month. And last year, with the help of Representative Horton and 106 of his colleagues, the designation of May as Asian Pacific Heritage Month each year became the law of the land.

The month of May was chosen because of its significance to Asian Pacific American history. In the first week of May in 1843, the first Japanese arrived in America. And on May 10, 1869, Golden Spike Day, the Transcontinental Railroad, built partly with Chinese labor, was completed. Today, 150 years after these historic events, nearly 8 million Asian Pacific Americans can trace their roots to Asia and the islands of the Pacific.

It is astonishing to realize the breadth of diversity among Americans of Asian Pacific heritage. The Asian Pacific community stretches across thousands of miles and encompasses millions of diverse people. In our country the Asian Pacific American community can trace its roots to at least 25 different nationalities, more than 75 different languages, and literally hundreds of different ethnic groups. Now, that's diversity.

And still Asian Pacific Americans have something in common and something to emulate, a commitment to strong families, to community, and to instilling in each new generation a respect for educational opportunity and hard work. These values have been an essential part of success in achieving the American dream, as so many Asian Pacific Americans know.

And while we realize all the rich opportunities America has given to all our people, we are aware also of how much Asian Pacific Americans have given back to this country. Immigrants from Asia and the Pacific helped build our country. Today their descendants are making us

even better. They are prominent among our scientists, artists, doctors, teachers, and other professionals who have enriched the lives of all of us in America.

I want to talk for a moment about the importance of education. The Asian Pacific community has demonstrated that a commitment to education is truly the key to bettering our lives. Among Asian Pacific Americans 25 years old and over, 82 percent have had 4 years of high school or more; 39 percent have completed 4 years of college or more. For individuals, education is the key to economic parity and social mobility. But for America, it is the key to our strength and our competitiveness in the global economy.

I want to thank you all again for coming here today to recognize all the achievements and the contributions that Asian Pacific Americans have made to this great Nation. I hope that we can continue to come together as we have today to rejoice in our diversity as we renew the bonds of community that bring all Americans together. I believe that if we embrace those things which we share, if we embrace our common values and our common goals, we strengthen ourselves, our community, and our democracy, and we make ourselves free to celebrate the richness of our diversity.

Therefore, it is with great pride and admiration that I take this opportunity, my first one, to sign the proclamation proclaiming this Asian Pacific American Heritage Month.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 5:40 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. The proclamation is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Nomination for Three Ambassadorial Posts

May 3, 1993

The President today announced his intention to nominate Laurence E. Pope II to be Ambassador to the Republic of Chad, Joseph A. Saloom to be Ambassador to the Republic of Guinea, and Steven E. Steiner to be U.S. Representative to the START Joint Compliance and Inspection Commission with the rank of Ambas-

sador. All three are career members of the U.S. Foreign Service.

"These three individuals will be excellent representatives of the United States and its interests," said the President. "They have served their country well throughout their careers, and I have confidence that they will continue to

do so.”

NOTE: Biographies of the nominees were made available by the Office of the Press Secretary.

Teleconference Remarks on Empowerment Zones and an Exchange With Reporters

May 4, 1993

The President. So we’ve got L.A., Kentucky, Chicago, Baltimore, York, and New York.

Q. Sounds like a good lineup.

The President. Sounds like a good lineup to me. I want to thank you all for joining me today. As you know, I have a new proposal we’re going to be discussing this morning that I believe is a fundamental departure from traditional programs offered by Democratic administrations and fundamentally different from the previous enterprise zone proposals offered by recent Republican administrations.

All of you represent areas of the country that, while unique, are each joined together by a common need. The economic potential of your areas, like other urban and rural communities, is still stifled because you lack the investment capital you need and a comprehensive strategy for jobs and growth. What we want to do is to help you to revive your communities economically. And our proposals for empowerment zones and enterprise neighborhoods we believe is the right way to begin.

Federal aid to these areas is certainly not new, but in the past it hasn’t always worked. There has often been no coordinated strategy for using the Federal money. Your growth has been restrained by a maze of Federal regulations and the need to appeal to an array of Federal Agencies. And these factors have contributed to an unwillingness on the part of too many companies to invest in your areas.

We’re trying to change all of that. We begin with a challenge: Under our program not a single dollar will go out without a coordinated strategy developed at the grassroots level. Yet your communities enjoy immense and committed talent at that level. Our plan proposes a partnership between local organizations so that they can coordinate the use of Federal, State, and local resources.

I know that your areas need investment capital, both public and private. Our proposal provides targeted investment incentives to draw in-

vestment dollars into distressed urban and rural communities. Your areas deal with a confusing maze of Agencies and regulations. This proposal features a single point of contact so that the Federal Government contributes to rather than stifles the rebirth of your communities. We’re going to streamline regulations, rules, and paperwork so that we reward initiative at the local level.

These are innovations and new approaches. They’re going to result in new economic growth, opportunity, and hope in areas long denied their piece of the American dream. And just as your local communities will have a chance to participate in the planning of their economic revival, we also want to offer you a chance now to discuss the economic challenges you face, to discuss this new effort to participate in the revival of your communities.

I just want to emphasize two or three things here. First of all, we do propose to do something that I discussed with the Mayors a few months ago, or several weeks ago, and that is to focus the limited money we have to spend here in terms of tax incentives and investments on, first of all, 10 empowerment zones that will get an enormous amount of concentrated effort to see if it works, a wage credit, credits for equipment, credits for rehabilitating existing housing. With a bottom-up community-based strategy and with a lot of waiver authority, we’re going to set up an enterprise board that will provide communities the opportunity to come and get waivers from all these Federal rules and regulations. I think that’s very important.

In addition to that, we’re going to have 100 more enterprise communities that will be targets for our other community investments, like the Federal funds we’re going to spend on setting up community policing to make the streets safer, the initiative we’re going to have in community development banks, and any number of other initiatives we’re going to have coming out of this Government. Those 100 communities will